

Mr. FOLEY. Madam Speaker, I just wanted to take a moment.

The other night I was quite alarmed because I saw on ABC News 20/20 a piece done by John Stossel regarding the impact of celebrity endorsements and the spending on diseases, and one of the things that came out of that seemed to be a bit of a negative perception of the money we are committing to AIDS funding and how some groups are starting to feel cheated by the Federal funding of their various programs, and I wanted to kind of address that issue because I am quite concerned about it, and I have actually heard about it from some of the groups coming before me to lobby for increases in their various diseases, and I want to suggest to all of the charities and all of the people listening and ask Mr. Stossel to look at his story once again and talk about the need to stay together on issues affecting public health, stay together on increasing funding at the National Institutes for Health for all diseases.

Madam Speaker, let us not single one out and make one a more important disease than the other. Let us not start bemoaning the fact that one may, in fact, have increased spending while others may have not had as much of an increase. Let us talk about AIDS and HIV for the moment because we see an alarming increase in the rate of both transmission among heterosexuals and amongst minorities.

So we clearly know that the AIDS virus and the epidemic is a significant problem, and it is the one disease that can be transmitted. There are others, of course. It is not the only one, but HIV can be transmitted through blood transfusion, through sexual contact, through drug use and through needle exchange.

So we recognize that the public is much more vulnerable to HIV and AIDS and the alarming spread and the increased cost to all taxpayers will, in fact, be exacerbated if we do not deploy the revenue to put forward the research to do what we can to bring a halt or at least to minimize the alarming spread of AIDS.

But I do want to say, as somebody who strongly stands on the floor to find funding for lupus, for Alzheimer's, for breast cancer, prostate cancer, Parkinson's disease, autism, Lou Gehrig's disease, American cancer, American heart and the other things that we all have to fight together, I will continue that fight, but I ask those charities to not dismiss or diminish others who are working hard to find a cure for AIDS.

The gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) and I are both on a bill that deals with trying to limit and minimize, if you will, the waiting time on Medicare for those that are stricken by diseases like Parkinson's and Lou Gehrig's. We want to increase that opportunity for those stricken by disease to be able to maintain a quality of life, to be able to get on Medicare earlier, to be able to get access to the proven

drugs and the things that may enhance their quality of life and make them healthy and as productive as we possibly can.

But I do not want to start down the road as Mr. Stossel did on ABC News 20/20 by suggesting somehow we should turn our backs on HIV and AIDS and somehow try and re-prioritize.

First, let me make correction of the assumption that was laid out in the piece that somehow we in Congress, Members of Congress, sit here and dictate to NIH where they will spend the money. That is not the case. NIH does their own screening empaneled, does their own determination. It is not influenced by politics.

That is very important. I am certain some of us would love to call up and say I would like some more money for Lou Gehrig's disease, but we cannot do that. That is why it is structured the way it is, so it is not influenced by those of us that may, in fact, be able to make a call.

So again, in all sincerity to all the charities, please, please, please do not come to our offices suggesting somehow that somebody is getting a bigger slice of the pie and that is not fair. Come to our offices and suggest we should all grow the pie to a larger number so we all can pursue meaningful research.

One of the things I am most happy about, if you will, is the fact that we are on the cutting edge of finding the causation of a number of diseases, Alzheimer's and others I have mentioned. We are on the cutting edge of new drug therapies that may, in fact, bring about a healthier quality of life for all Americans, and we are on the cutting edge, as we have noticed, protease inhibitors and others, working miraculously for people suffering from HIV infection.

Madam Speaker, these things are taking hold, they are taking place, and research is bringing us to a point hopefully in the near term, in the very, very short few years away, that we will start seeing some progress on these diseases. We will see an enhanced quality of life for all Americans, but we cannot do it by climbing on the backs of one another.

Again, let us remember to advocate for all, making certain that nobody is left out of the loop, making certain we are looking carefully at all the diseases, making certain we are doing all we can to enhance AIDS funding, and I know a number of my colleagues are joining us in that effort. We have all asked the appropriators to increase NIH, to help the Department of Defense in their work on breast cancer research, so nobody is being left out of the loop.

So again I urge people to disregard some of the stories they see on those issues and continue to work for all Americans who are suffering with us today.

VOICES AGAINST VIOLENCE CONFERENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, I rise this evening in great anticipation of next week's Voices Against Violence Teen Conference. The conference is a unique opportunity for Congress to listen to our Nation's youth. In our efforts to understand our young people and to curtail the violence which surrounds them all too often, we sometimes forget to consult the teenagers themselves. This is a mistake. It is time for us to learn from them.

When applications for this conference were distributed in my district, I thought there would be some interest, but I was simply overwhelmed by the response. It was tough deciding on the three teenagers to send to Washington, so I decided to form a Youth Advisory Council in my district. This council made up of all the applicants will advise the three delegates on their trip to the conference.

Our first Advisory Council meeting was held this past Monday. Students came from across my district, from Paso Robles to Santa Barbara. Some drove for 2 hours to have their opinions and feelings heard. The discussions were riveting and moving. It was fascinating to hear their views on the causes of youth and violence from young people themselves. Family was the focus. More than anything, these students see a strong home environment as the key to happier, better adjusted children and reduced violence.

Young people need to rely on their parents. They need to be able to communicate with their family members. They also cited peer and academic pressures, violence in the media, socioeconomic circumstances and discrimination as root causes of youth violence. Drugs and alcohol are also seen as contributing factors. Gun safety issues and gang pressures are certainly a part of their lives.

We discussed a range of solutions from metal detectors to school counseling to hot lines to recreational programs. Students raised the idea of having closed campuses on their high schools, limiting the ability of students to leave the building throughout the day. I was astounded to hear that some of the students do not think that closed campuses are realistic because they are too crowded.

One described his high school which houses 3100 students although it was built for 1800. I had not really thought of the school construction efforts here in Congress as being linked to school violence, but these students showed me that that link is very much a reality.

In more emotional moments we heard from a brave young woman who talked about her personal and triumphant battle with drugs, a habit which had been spurred on by the drug use and addiction of her parents. Another

young woman recounted the fatal stabbing of her boyfriend on school grounds. She spoke with the deceased young man's mother sitting close by her side.

These are stories that we in Congress must hear and keep with us as we sort out our legislative options.

Madam Speaker, it is time for us to start listening to the students. Their insight can help us to understand the roots of today's violence and what we can do to help them stop it. I am so pleased that I will be able to welcome Cheryl Villapania from El Puente High School in Santa Barbara, Stacie Pollock from Righetti High School in Santa Maria, and Brandon Tuman from Arroyo Grande High School in San Luis Obispo County. They are going to travel across the country next week to attend our conference, and I also commend their chaperone, Raquel Lopez, from Girls Incorporated in Santa Barbara. These capable young people will be the eyes and ears of our Youth Advisory Council here in Washington D.C. They will bring the concerns of the young people from the 22nd District of California to the conference and then report back to our youth and to our community on what they have accomplished. I am proud of them for taking the initiative, for making their voices heard on issues that are important to them, important to us all.

As important as our work here is in the capital, we know that the real work of reducing violence that surrounds our young people is going to come from within the communities themselves. Voices Against Violence conference is an excellent step in the right direction. I commend the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) and his staff for their leadership in organizing this conference. I look forward to welcoming to the capital next week students from the central coast of California and from around the country.

HATE CRIMES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Hate Crime Prevention Act, and I strongly urge the Commerce-State-Justice conferees to include this important legislation in their conference report.

Since I was first elected to Congress, I have been focusing on the issues of livable communities, how we can create better partnerships between the Federal Government, State and local governments, private business and individual citizens to make our communities more livable. This means, in sum, communities that are safe, healthy and economically secure. If people are not safe from discrimination, the community is definitely not livable.

I have been a strong supporter of anti-discrimination efforts throughout

my public service career. As a member of the Oregon State House of Representatives way back in 1973 I had an eye opening experience when I had the opportunity to chair the legislature's first hearing on the issue of gay rights. The Hate Crimes Prevention Act is an excellent opportunity for the Federal Government to continue a trend over the last 50 years of moving aggressively to deal with issues of anti-discrimination.

Since 1969, the Federal Government has had the ability to prosecute hate crimes if that crime was motivated by bias based on race, religion, national origin or color and if that victim was attempting to exercise a federally protected right. The law has, in fact, proven to be a valuable tool in the fight against hate crimes, but unfortunately these hate crimes are still a part of the American landscape, and sometimes the language of the current federal statute is simply too narrowly drawn. The Hate Crimes Prevention Act would make a critical amendment to the law, removing the requirement that the activity be, quote, federally protected and adds sexual orientation, gender and disability as covered categories.

As I said, there are still hate crimes among us. In 1997 there were over 8,000 that were reported.

I have had the opportunity to witness firsthand that there are real faces attached to those statistics. One of the most searing experiences in our community occurred about 10 years ago when three Ethiopian immigrants were attacked in my hometown of Portland, Oregon, one beaten to death solely because of the color of their skin. I think our hearts all went out to the families of the victims, but there were more victims than the immediate family.

Sadly I was acquainted with a family of one of the people, the skin heads, who were convicted of that murder, a young man who will spend the rest of his life behind bars, tearing up his family, and indeed the whole community was touched with the awful knowledge that something of that nature could occur in our midst.

If we can send clear signals that hate crimes are not acceptable, we can do more than just convict those who are guilty. If with these strong signals we can prevent these horrible crimes from happening in the first place, we will be making our communities more livable.

I hope that my colleagues will join in the cosponsorship of the Hate Crime Prevention Act and that they will all prevail upon the conferees of Commerce-State-Justice to move this important process forward by including the legislation in the conference report.

GOOD NEWS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Madam Speaker, I want to share with my colleagues and

those who are watching in their offices some incredibly good news that appeared yesterday in many newspapers around the country, USA Today, many of the national newspapers. I know the St. Paul Pioneer Press back in my State carried the story, but it is incredibly good news, and I would like to read just the first paragraph or so.

It says something symbolically enormous may have happened today. The Congressional Budget Office announced that the government may have balanced the budget in fiscal year 1999. Now that is the one we just completed October 1 without spending Social Security money.

□ 1845

It goes on to say, if so, it would be the first time that that has happened since 1960 when Dwight Eisenhower was President, gentlemen sported fedoras, and women wore fox stoles.

Madam Speaker, this is incredibly good news for all generations. In fact, there were some other things that happened. To put this in perspective, the last time the Federal Government actually balanced the budget without using the Social Security trust funds, Elvis was just getting out of the army and going back to recording. The television show Bonanza was just going on the air. Apples sold for 18 cents a pound. The French company introduced the Renault Dalphine to the American market for about \$1,400 per automobile. The minimum wage was \$1, and some may even remember that Bill Mazerowski hit a home run in the bottom of the ninth to power the Pittsburgh Pirates to a world series win over the New York Yankees. I might add, and this is what really got my attention, the last time that the Congress and the Federal Government balanced the budget without using Social Security Trust Fund money, the last time that happened was 11 years before Congressman Paul Ryan was born. That really puts this into perspective. This has been a long time. In fact, I would like to say that we have been wandering in the wilderness of growing deficits for 40 years and finally, we have crossed the River Jordan, and I hope that we will not turn back.

Let me just show my colleagues another chart. This is what the Congressional Budget Office told us when I came here just five years ago in 1995. I was elected in 1994. But what they were saying was that in 1994, the Congress borrowed \$57 billion from the Social Security Trust Fund, and then it went to \$69 billion and then to \$73 billion and then to \$78 billion, and they were projecting that had the Congress had not gotten serious about controlling the growth in Federal spending and actually balancing the budget, they were projecting by this year we would be borrowing at least \$90 billion from the Social Security trust fund. Again I say, this is good news.

Now, we are in a great budget debate right now with the White House in